Chapter 2: The Church is Tempered (AD 33 – 313)

1. The Heroic Age of the Church
    a. "They have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."
    b. *the age of the Church when it was tempered with fires of persecution*
2. The Apostolic Church is Persecuted
    a. Peter and John were imprisoned and persecuted
    b. Stephen and James both died as martyrs
    c. Paul was dragged by a Jewish mob to the Roman Governor Gallio, who promptly turned the Jews away
    d. At first, the Jews mostly persecuted the early Christians (as well as Jesus), but the Romans carried on later with more hatred
3. Nero, the first emperor to persecute Christians
    a. Rome burned for 6 days (and nights) in AD 64 during Nero's reign
    b. Allegedly, Nero started the fire and put the blame to the thriving community of Christians
    c. As punishment, many Christians died by burning
    d. Peter was crucified, according to tradition up-side-down (he wouldn't want to emulate Christ's crucifixion), while Paul being a Roman citizen was beheaded
    e. *The persecution of Christians at this time was minutely confined in the city of Rome but not quite widespread in other areas of the empire*
4. Ignatius, Justin (Juntinius), and Polycarp (Polycarpus)
    a. In the next 100 years, little persecution was felt in Rome's center but much in other parts of the empire
    b. Ignatius Theophorus (Bishop of Antioch) – one of the Apostolic Fathers, that was killed by wild beast as a spectacle (under Trajan's reign around AD 108)
    c. Polycarp (Bishop of Smyrna) – also one of the Apostolic Fathers, being the last to be personally taught by the apostles that was burned at the stake and stabbed (perhaps under Antoninus Pius' reign in AD 156)
    d. Justin Martyr – the early Apologist, was beheaded (because he might be a Roman citizen) during the reign of Marcus Aurelius between AD 162-168
5. Persecution is continued under Marcus Aurelius
    a. Marcus Aurelius (161 – 180) decreed that the property of a Christian is given to the accuser
    b. Blandina (died AD 177) – a slave who became Christian and was persecuted along with her master in Lyons (Gaul, part of the Roman Empire at that time, now modern France); half-roasted and goaded by wild bulls
6. A lull in the storm
    a. A relative peace for Christians over the course of 70 years (except for some 11 years under Septimus Severus in 200-211)
    b. Origen Adamantius – his father Leonides of Alexandria was martyred during Septimus Severus reign in 202, and was a victim of persecution (although did not die of it) under Decius in 251
    c. Irenaeus (Bishop of Lugdunnum, Gaul) – believed to be martyred in AD 202
7. Efforts are made to destroy the church
    a. Decius (Emperor of Rome, AD 249-251) – first emperor to order general persecution of Christians
    b. Valerian (Emperor of Rome, AD 253-260) – ordered Christians to worship Roman gods or suffer consequences in AD 257
    c. Diocletian (Emperor of Rome, AD, 284-305)
    d. Galerius (Emperor of Rome, AD 305-311)
8. Galerius calls a halt
    a. Galerius being sick and dying, issued an edict that Christian can gather again, and asked to pray for him and the empire (the edict of Toleration)
    b. This was not complete victory for the Christians, but only a beginning